

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) comprising a fluid permeable cover (62), a baffle (64) and an absorbent (66), the absorbent article being configured for disposition within a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent having a substantially circular geometry and a periphery, the absorbent having at least one notch (100) situated in its periphery, wherein the absorbent has a z-axis thickness along a z-axis of the article; the absorbent is situated along the z-axis between a lower surface of the cover and an upper, body-facing surface of the baffle;  
the at least one notch extends entirely through ~~an entire~~ the z-axis thickness of the absorbent and extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent;  
the absorbent has a radius of no greater than about 50 mm and no less than about 15 mm; and  
the ~~substantially circular~~ absorbent has a z-axis thickness of no less than about 1 mm and no greater than about 10 mm, and has a basis weight of no less than 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
2. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 2 mm.
3. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 2, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the clitoris.
4. (original) The absorbent article of claim 2, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.
5. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 2, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's perineum (50) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the perineum.
6. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1, further comprising a fluid permeable cover (62).

7. (original) The absorbent article of claim 6, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.
8. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1, further comprising a liquid impermeable baffle (64).
9. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than 3 mm.
10. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.
11. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) comprising a fluid permeable cover (62), a liquid impermeable baffle (64) and an absorbent (66) situated between the cover and the baffle, the absorbent article being configured for disposition within a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent having a substantially circular geometry and a periphery, the absorbent having at least one notch (100) situated in its periphery, wherein  
the absorbent has a z-axis thickness along a z-axis of the article;  
the absorbent is situated along the z-axis between a lower surface of the cover and an upper, body-facing surface of the baffle;  
the at least one notch extends entirely through ~~an entire~~ the z-axis thickness of the absorbent and extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent;  
the absorbent has a radius of no greater than about 50 mm and no less than about 20 mm; and  
the ~~substantially circular~~ absorbent has a z-axis thickness of no less than about 1 mm and no greater than about 10 mm, and has a basis weight of no less than about 150 g/m<sup>2</sup>.
12. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 11, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 4 mm.
13. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 12, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the clitoris.
14. (original) The absorbent article of claim 12, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

15. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 12, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's perineum (50) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the perineum.

16. (original) The absorbent article of claim 11, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

17. (original) The absorbent article of claim 11, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.

18. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) comprising a fluid permeable cover, a liquid impermeable baffle (64) and an absorbent (66), the absorbent article being configured for disposition within a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent having a substantially circular geometry and a periphery, the absorbent having at least one notch (100) situated in its periphery, wherein the absorbent has a z-axis thickness along a z-axis of the article;  
the absorbent is situated along the z-axis between a lower surface of the cover and an upper, body-facing surface of the baffle;  
the at least one notch extends entirely through an entire the z-axis thickness of the absorbent and extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 5 mm;  
the absorbent has a radius of no greater than about 50 mm and no less than about 15 mm; and  
the ~~substantially circular~~ absorbent has a z-axis thickness of no less than about ~~[[1]]~~ 2 mm and no greater than about 10 mm, and has a basis weight of no less than about 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

19. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 18, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent with a depth of no less than about 10 mm.

20. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 19, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the clitoris.

21. (original) The absorbent article of claim 19, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

22. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 19, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's perineum (50) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the perineum.

23. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 18, wherein the substantially circular absorbent has a basis weight of no less than about 150 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

24. (original) The absorbent article of claim 23, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

25. (original) The absorbent article of claim 18, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.

26. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) comprising a fluid permeable cover (62), a liquid impermeable baffle and an absorbent (66), the absorbent article being configured for disposition within a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent having a substantially circular geometry and a periphery, the absorbent having at least one notch (100) situated in its periphery, wherein  
the absorbent has a z-axis thickness along a z-axis of the article;  
the absorbent is situated along the z-axis between a lower surface of the cover and an upper, body-facing surface of the baffle;  
the at least one notch extends through an entire z-axis thickness of the absorbent and extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 15 mm; and  
the absorbent has a radius of no greater than about 50 mm and no less than about 15 mm;  
the ~~substantially circular~~ absorbent has a z-axis thickness of no less than about ~~[[1]]~~ 3 mm and no greater than about 10 mm, and has a basis weight of no less than about 100 g/m<sup>2</sup>.

27. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 26, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 20 mm.

28. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 27, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the clitoris.

29. (original) The absorbent article of claim 27, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

30. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 27, wherein the notch has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's perineum (50) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch located in that portion of the absorbent article situated nearest the perineum.

31. (previously amended) The absorbent article of claim 26, wherein the substantially circular absorbent has a basis weight of no less than about  $150 \text{ g/m}^2$ .

32. (original) The absorbent article of claim 26, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

33. (original) The absorbent article of claim 26, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.

**Amendments to the Drawings:**

The attached, new sheet of drawings includes an added Figure 6A which shows an absorbent enclosed by a cover. The new sheet includes only the additional FIG. 6A, and is submitted to address an objection raised by the Examiner.